

## Nature Coast State Trail

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**Planning Region:** Trail System

**County:** Dixie, Gilchrist, and Levy

**Lease/Management Agreement Number:** 4193

### Overview

A primary linkage network, the Nature Coast State Trail preserves numerous scenic and cultural resources, including the historic railroad corridor itself. Occasionally, visitors can observe threatened Florida Manatees, Bald Eagles, and Gulf Sturgeons along the Suwannee River Historic Railroad Bridge. The trail supports a regional trail network for the Suwannee River Valley, connecting people to nearby communities and state parks through healthier modes of transportation.

**Total Acreage:** 656.27

<b>Altered Landcover</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Developed	656.27

**Acquisition:** The Nature Coast State Trail was initially acquired on December 18, 1996, from CSX Transportation, Inc. with Preservation 2000 funds.

### Resource Management Component Objectives

#### Hydrology

- Conduct a site assessment study to identify potential hydrology restoration needs.

#### Imperiled Species

- Develop baseline imperiled species occurrence inventory list.
- Develop and implement monitoring protocols for eight selected imperiled species, as determined by the baseline report (Eastern indigo snake, southern hognose snake, Chapman's Skeletongrass, Florida Mouse, gopher tortoise, Florida Manatee, Gulf Sturgeon, and Bald Eagle).

#### Invasive and Nuisance Species

- Conduct a baseline study of the entire property to determine the presence, location and density of exotic and invasive plants and animals.
- Annually treat invasive exotic plant species, as determined by baseline study.
- Implement control measures on exotic and nuisance animal species, as determined by baseline study.

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### **Cultural Resources**

- Update the existing baseline report of all archeological and historical sites/resources on the property to identify the resources that are in a degraded condition.
- Ensure that a total of 13 known sites are recorded with the Florida Division of Historical Resources (DHR), Florida Master Site File (FMSF) as determined by the baseline report (Suwannee River Historic Railroad Bridge (DI00261), Cross City Depot (undocumented resource), Historic Railroad Corridor (undocumented resource), Kentucky Lake Site (GI00081), 8499 SW CR 334-A (GI00100), Trenton Railroad (GI00114) State Road 26/Wade Ave (GI00115), Trenton Historic District (GI00117), Main Street in Trenton/US 129/FL 49 (GI000126), Trenton Depot (GI00137), Suwannee River Historic Railroad Bridge (GI 00229), Chiefland Railroad Depot (LV00541), Historic Railroad Corridor (undocumented resource).
- Monitor 10 previously recorded sites and send updates to the FMSF as needed.
- Bring recorded sites into a good condition (as determined by the baseline report above).

### **Land Use Component Objectives**

#### **Conceptual Land Use**

##### General Trail Needs

- Improve interpretation at every trailhead.
- Develop an interpretive theme.
- Provide informational/ intersection signage.
- Improve vegetative buffering.

##### Cross City Trailhead

- Restore and interpret Cross City Depot.
- Pave parking lot.
- Acquire property and remove structure.

##### Old Town Trailhead/Suwannee River Trestle Bridge

- Provide interpretive/ directional signage.
- Consider stabilizing and delineating parking spaces.

##### Fanning Springs Trailhead

- Consider paving parking lot.
- Improve traffic flow and traffic signage.
- Improve interpretation.

##### Wilcox Junction

- Provide interpretation.
- Provide repairs to Flying Dog Bridge, if needed.

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- Consider low-impact landscaping.

### Chiefland Trailhead

- Provide wayfinding-centered interpretation.

### Trenton Trailhead

- Extend paved trail.
- Improve interpretation and further develop the rail depot.
- Protect trail features/ facilities with improved signage and oversight.

### **Optimum Boundary**

The Office of Greenways and Trails Land Trail Priority, the Nature Coast Trail Corridor, proposes connections to disjunct sections along the eastern stretches of the trail's boundary. This addition will also aid in connecting other state trails and local projects including the Newberry to High Springs Corridor. The Newberry to High Springs Corridor, a S.M.A.L.L. Office of Greenways (OGT) project, will improve recreational connectivity by providing a connection to the Gainesville-to-Hawthorne State Trail and will function as an ecological greenway, closing gaps within the OGT Trails Priority System. To the south, the Land Trail Priority Nature Coast Regional Connector Trail will also provide a continuous connection from Chiefland to Dunnellon, providing a connection to the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway and the Withlacoochee State Trail. Another S.M.A.L.L. project and Land Trail Priority, the Georgia to Cross City Corridor, exhibits the potential to extend the trail from Cross City to Perry. Acquisition of this Land Trail Priority could also extend the trail to Monticello.